

4VAC15-110-35 (New)

Game: Fox: Part II: Hunting with guns.

Summary:

The proposal is to establish a daily bag limit for hunting gray fox.

Proposed language of amendment:

4VAC15-110-35. Bag limit.

The bag limit for hunting gray fox shall be one per hunting party, individual or organized, taken between noon of one day and noon the following day.

Rationale:

Population trend information for gray foxes suggest that populations have been slowly declining for the past 20 years. In areas where populations are currently at low levels, harvest by humans may be suppressing population growth or contributing towards further declines. Since most gray foxes are harvested by hunters (versus trappers), this proposal is intended to provide a meaningful reduction in hunter harvest that may have positive population impacts. Although the average number of gray foxes killed per hunter per day is usually low, the potential exists to kill multiple animals per day, especially when using electronic calls. Gray foxes are very susceptible to harvest with electronic calls and are much more likely to approach within close gunshot range than red foxes. Significant numbers of gray foxes could be killed in a short period of time where populations exist. This proposal would be expected to reduce gray fox harvest and the potential for removing too many foxes from disjunct habitat patches that may not be easily recolonized.